

A TRIBUTE TO JOHN NEECE

**HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA**

OF CALIFORNIA

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

**HON. ANNA G. ESHOO**

OF CALIFORNIA

**HON. SAM FARR**

OF CALIFORNIA

**HON. ZOE LOFGREN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 25, 2001*

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, today I join with my colleagues, Representatives STARK, ESHOO, FARR, and LOFGREN in honoring the retirement of a dedicated public servant, John Neece. John's retirement as Chief Executive Officer of the Santa Clara and San Benito Counties Building and Construction Trades Council ends 21 years of exemplary service to his community.

A native of San Jose, California, John Neece attended Lowell Elementary and Roosevelt Junior High, and graduated from San Jose High in 1962. After becoming a member of the Ironworker's Apprenticeship Program, John went on to join the Santa Clara and San Benito Building and Construction Trades Council in 1979. John became the youngest Chief Executive Officer of any council in the State, as well as the youngest delegate from the State of California to the International Iron Workers.

Through John Neece's visionary leadership, the Building and Construction Trades Council became the important organization that it is today: a source of strong advocacy for workers and labor. A former ironworker himself, John utilized his insight, energy and vision to become the Trades business agent. As an organizer and a leader, John has been successful in creating growth in the union movement and cooperation with other local unions and developers. His efforts made the Trades Council a crucial force within the Bay Area.

However, John Neece's service has not been limited to the building and construction industry. John has participated in various community programs in Santa Clara County and volunteered his time on numerous boards throughout Silicon Valley. John is an Executive Board Member and Second Vice President of the South Bay AFL-CIO Labor Council, and serves on the Board of several agencies such as the Valley Medical Center Foundation and the Joint Venture Silicon Valley Board and Visioning Council. John has also served in the past on the Boards of the Red Cross Capital Campaign Committee and the Red Cross Disaster Relief Program.

Mr. Speaker, John Neece leaves behind a life-long legacy of excellence and professionalism. It has been a great pleasure for my fellow Members and I to work with him, and it is an honor to be able to pay tribute to him here. John Neece has been a great friend to us all, and we wish him well.

ON THE INTRODUCTION OF THE RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION ACT FOR THE 21st CENTURY ("RIDE-21")

**HON. DON YOUNG**

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 25, 2001*

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, Today, I introduce the Rail Infrastructure Development and Expansion Act for the 21st Century. RIDE-21 is the first truly workable proposal for developing high-speed passenger rail infrastructure in the United States.

As Chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee I have made easing congestion on the ground, in the air and on the water the top priority this Congress. I believe that construction of a true high-speed passenger rail system in the United States is an integral piece of that solution.

The United States needs safe and efficient high-speed rail, whether it is steel wheel or magnetic levitation. It will help reduce congestion on America's highways and air lanes by connecting urban centers. It will also provide the traveling public more options.

The tragedies of September 11, and the resulting short-term cessation of air travel, demonstrated the need for transportation alternatives for passengers. The increase in the amount of time it will now take to clear airport security has added to the time it takes to travel by air, potentially making high-speed rail a competitive alternative in some regional markets. Simply stated, it is time for the United States to make high-speed passenger rail a transportation priority.

RIDE-21 is not the only proposal before Congress that makes federal dollars available for the development of high-speed passenger rail. Other bills, such as H.R. 2329 in the House and S. 250 in the Senate, are well intended and are designed to address high-speed rail infrastructure needs as well; but those bills fall short. There are three significant reasons why other proposals will not get our nation any closer to a comprehensive national system of high-speed passenger rail corridors: (1) They do not provide enough funding, (2) they do not provide sufficient flexibility in the hands of States in making transportation decisions, and (3) what little money is provided comes at too high a cost to the Federal Treasury.

## HIGHER INVESTMENT

RIDE-21 generates more than \$71 billion for high-speed passenger rail infrastructure through the sale of bonds and the approval of federal loans and loan guarantees. In the hearing held by the Subcommittee on Railroads of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on July 25, we learned that Amtrak estimates that it would cost up to \$70 billion to build high-speed rail in the United States. That's what I mean when I say that RIDE-21 is the first truly credible high-speed passenger rail proposal. It gets the job done.

In addition, I am very concerned that states may misunderstand the scope of other bills. Amtrak's Northeast Corridor needs \$20 billion to upgrade the southern portion of the Northeast Corridor alone. Meanwhile, on September 12, U.S. Rail News reported that Virginia and North Carolina estimate that it will take more

than \$2.5 billion just to build high-speed rail infrastructure from Washington, D.C., to Charlotte, North Carolina. Proposals such as these and similar projects in Florida and in the Midwest would far surpass the funding level provided in competing bills.

## TOO LITTLE FLEXIBILITY FOR STATES

Under competing proposals, Amtrak has too much control over the approval and funding of high speed systems. Amtrak's financial condition is in serious jeopardy, and I am concerned about its ability to perform the tasks assigned to it under these bills, such as issuing bonds, managing a fund to repay the bonds, managing the proceeds from the bonds, and repaying the bonds. I also have doubts that Amtrak could even raise the intended \$12 billion. As the Congressional Budget Office noted in a report on H.R. 2329 issued yesterday, bond buyers would be very reluctant to pay the face value of the bonds in later years because of the high risk that Amtrak could not repay the bonds. Moreover, Amtrak should concentrate on its core business of operating passenger trains and carrying mail and express and premium traffic.

RIDE-21 puts the federal and state governments in control of the development of high-speed passenger rail and balances their roles. On the one hand, it places the federal government, through the Department of Transportation, in control over approving the basic design of the high-speed rail network in the United States. Among its roles, the DOT must determine whether a corridor is a comprehensive and viable high-speed corridor. The DOT must determine whether the proposal makes a significant step toward achieving speeds of at least 125 miles per hour on the corridor. The DOT must determine whether all at-grade rail crossings are eliminated.

On the other hand, RIDE-21 puts states and compacts of states in the conductor's seat by giving them flexibility to address their transportation needs. States are free to develop the high-speed rail proposals that the DOT will review. States can choose which technology to employ and which routes make the most sense. States can take their project proposals directly to the DOT, without having to go through Amtrak as an intermediary. States, not Amtrak, control the bond proceeds, how they are managed, and how they are spent.

RIDE-21 does not leave states holding the bag, though. In fact, the cost of RIDE-21 to the states is about the same as the cost to the states of H.R. 2329. H.R. 2329 requires states to provide Amtrak with a minimum of 20 percent of the project cost. The states' contributions are then intended to grow over time so that Amtrak can use that money to pay off the bonds. If the states use a similar "sinking-fund structure," they will need to put up about the same amount of money so that it will grow into enough to pay off the bonds. Of course, under RIDE-21 states need not use a "sinking fund," because they are given flexibility to determine how to pay off the bonds.

Finally, Amtrak benefits from RIDE-21. As the only operator of high-speed passenger trains in the United States, Amtrak will be a partner with the states in many projects. And, it will have a clear competitive advantage when it comes time to bid on contracts to operate trains on this new rail network. As owner of the Northeast Corridor, Amtrak can also benefit from infrastructure improvements there, financed by the states under this bill. Amtrak

can focus on operating trains more efficiently while the DOT and states worry about the improvement of passenger rail infrastructure. Therefore, if it demonstrates its ability to seriously compete for operation of new high speed corridors, Amtrak will actually benefit under RIDE-21.

MORE BANG FOR THE BUCK

RIDE-21 is fiscally responsible. The \$71 billion investment in infrastructure through RIDE-21 will cost the federal government about \$6 billion. The other bills, which provide for only a \$12 billion investment, will cost the treasury about \$7.4 billion, according to CBO. Any taxpayer can tell that RIDE-21 is a better value.

Finally, RIDE-21 creates jobs. \$71 billion to construct high-speed passenger rail infrastructure means good jobs for hard-working Americans.

I encourage Members to study RIDE-21 carefully and to become cosponsors of this bill.

#### TRIBUTE TO CALIFORNIA TASK FORCE 7

**HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 25, 2001*

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in tribute to the California Task Force 7, Sacramento Urban Search and Rescue Unit. On September 11, 2001, just hours after the murderous attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, sixty-four members of the Sacramento Urban Search and Rescue Team departed for New York City to assist with the recovery efforts. As their family and friends gather to welcome them home, I ask all my colleagues to join with me in saluting one of America's finest search and rescue teams.

The California Task Force 7, Sacramento Urban Search and Rescue Team, is comprised of members from Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District, Sacramento Fire Department, West Sacramento Fire, and El Dorado County Fire Protection District.

The Sacramento Urban Search and Rescue Unit is considered a multi-hazard discipline, as it may be needed for a variety of emergencies or disasters, including earthquakes, hurricanes, typhoons, storms, tornadoes, floods, dam failures, technological accidents, terrorist activities, and hazardous material releases.

The California Task Force 7 has always been a leader in supporting rescue efforts throughout the United States. The Unit was one of the first Urban Search and Rescue teams mobilized after the Oklahoma City bombing, arriving thirteen hours after the blast. The Unit also played an instrumental role in the rescue and relief efforts in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics bombing, the 1996 Yosemite Rock Slide, and the 1996/1997 California Floods.

The Sacramento Search and Rescue Unit is comprised of sixty-four highly qualified and dedicated specialists divided into four groups: Search, Rescue, Technical, and Medical. Team members include specialists in structural engineering, hazardous materials, heavy rigging, search and rescue, canine response, logistics, and medical response, which includes four medical specialists and two physicians. By design, there are two personnel as-

signed to each position for the rotation and relief. This allows for round-the-clock task force operations. A comprehensive equipment cache totaling 60,000 pounds supports the task force.

For ten days, the members of the California Task Force 7 worked tirelessly and selflessly in search of survivors in the rubble of the World Trade Center towers in New York City. These outstanding search and rescue specialists courageously answered our nation's call for their assistance and compassion during this hour of need. Their bravery, valor, and patriotism in the face of such tragic events is inspiring to all Sacramentans and to all Americans, and deserves our most heartfelt gratitude.

Mr. Speaker, as the exceptional people of the Sacramento Urban Search and Rescue Unit return home, we are honored to pay tribute to some of our area's most heroic and dedicated citizens. The California Task Force 7 serves as an invaluable resource to the Sacramento Region, the State of California, and the United States of America. We ask all of our colleagues to join us in thanking the men and women of the Sacramento Urban Search and Rescue Unit for their fearless dedication and service to our country during this national tragedy.

#### EDITORIAL IN THE JEFFERSON CITY NEWS TRIBUNE

**HON. IKE SKELTON**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 25, 2001*

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to share with the Members of the House the excellent editorial in the Jefferson City News Tribune following Tuesday's horrific events. The fine statement is set forth as follows:

#### AMERICANS UNDER ATTACK

Abject honor does not begin to describe the reaction to this morning's attack on New York City and Washington, D.C.

Much remains unknown.

What is certain, however, is that the attack was an act of war on American people on American soil.

At this juncture, we know that shortly before 9 a.m. EDT today an American Airlines jet hijacked after take-off from Boston, struck one of the twin towers at the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan.

Within minutes, a second airplane, also believed hijacked from American Airlines, struck the trade center's second tower.

Both towers caught fire and subsequently collapsed in a massive implosion of burning debris.

Later this morning a commercial jetliner, also believed to have been hijacked, crashed into the Pentagon in Washington D.C. That was followed by a car bomb exploding outside the State Department.

In addition, another jetliner, possibly hijacked from United Airlines, crashed outside Pittsburgh, PA.

The death toll, although yet unknown, will be staggering. The World Trade Center itself houses an estimated 50,000 employees, exceeding the population of Jefferson City.

Passengers on the hijacked jet and other people on the ground also have perished. In reaction, all flights in the nation have been cancelled, key buildings have been evacuated and the military has been placed on alert.

The miscreants, presumably terrorists, who perpetrated these malevolent attacks also remain unknown.

They must be identified, and they and their ilk must be exterminated like the vermin they have shown themselves to be.

America has been attacked mercilessly. To serve notice that this must never happen again, our response must be equally merciless.

#### TRIBUTE TO TIM MCCALLION

**HON. JOE BACA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 25, 2001*

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to pay tribute to my friend, Tim McCallion, who will be inducted into the Independent Telephone Pioneer Association's Hall of Fame on September 29, 2001 in recognition of his distinguished career with GTE.

Mr. McCallion is an individual of great distinction, and we join with his colleagues, family and friends in honoring his remarkable achievements in the telecommunications industry and his service to his community.

Tim's long career with Verizon, formerly GTE, began in 1976 when he joined the accounting department in Erie, Pennsylvania, as he was finishing up his MBA at Gannon University. Over the next two decades, Tim's career with GTE took him all around the country from Pennsylvania, to Indiana, Connecticut, Hawaii and finally to California.

Though Tim's career began in the accounting field, he quickly moved into public policy. Tim currently serves as the Pacific Regional President responsible for Regulatory, Government Affairs, Public Affairs and corporate interests in Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

Tim's colleagues refer to him as the "go to guy." A man who applies initiative and creativity to his service, Tim never fails to take on daunting tasks. When the ITPA needed to have their books audited, and incredibly demanding job with Verizon, Tim volunteered. His colleagues remark that in the fast paced and ever changing telecommunications market it is nice to know that there are people like Tim willing to help.

I personally know this to be true. As a member of the California State Assembly and Senate, I worked closely with Tim over the years on several pieces of telecommunications legislation. I could always count on Tim for his tenacity and his expertise in telecom regulation and policy. He worked to spearhead telecom legislation in California that greatly benefited my constituents and the rest of the state. It was always a pleasure and an honor to work with Tim.

Tim has continued to be a valued informational resource to me here in Congress. America leads the world in the Telecommunications Revolution, but there are still many goals to accomplish. I salute Verizon for its efforts to end the Digital Divide. Verizon has been a key supporter of HR 1542, the Tauzin-Dingell Bill, which will stimulate competition in the high speed internet market, giving consumers more choices, lower prices and more services. Tim's hard work supporting this important legislation has been critical in the two-year struggle that